EDLD 5364

Teaching With Technology

5th Week Reflection

This week, in EDLD 5364 our focus was on examining practical ways to use technology activities and how we can guide students to deeper understanding of concepts and knowledge in the classroom. We examined what some “big thinkers” have to say about what future of technology and its role in education. Pitler stated that students need to understand how to use the similarities and differences in the reflection of their learning. Students need to use comparing, classifying, and analogies in their learning activities. Teachers should model these concepts by using graphic organizers in the instruction process. Some teachers use software such as Inspiration or Kidspiration as graphic organizers. But teachers can use tables, premade templates, and other tools and shapes in word processing to analyze data. This enables teachers to encourage students to use their higher order thinking skills and guides the students to make contrasts and comparisons. Students need to use collaborative environments to solve problems to gain authentic assessment. It is important that they work collaborately and receive feedback. We can use web 2.0 tools to utilize these exercises in the classroom and as we move into virtual environments. Students also need to present work collaborately to receive feedback about what they learn. Teaching with technology is changing and we need to move forward so that our students can be prepared for the future. The learning environments are changing and becoming more virtual. We are moving toward a virtual Web 3.0 learning environment. We spent time working in our groups and reflected on our own group project as we included technology in our group project working to solve our classroom scenario.

We watched the Edutopia and Youtube videos which gave us some thoughts from the “Big thinkers” on teaching with technology. They stated that we have to be able to educate our students on how to solve problems. They stressed the need for students to be able to collaboratively solve problems innovating various types of technology tools. A couple of the “big thinkers” pointed out that video games put students into worlds where they can spend time with the characters in the game solving. The games provide an immediate form of assessment. These games are fun and continuously give feedback at all times. The games provide solutions to the game scenario. Even Steven Speiberg has created a game called Boom Blox that allows game players to work toward a challenge gaining knowledge about the game as it is played and ultimately gaining solutions to the problem scenario through game play. This innovation and creativity of game play can be more rewarding with the use of technology and innovative ideas in the classroom instead of the routine skill and drill practice that has been utilized in the classroom in the past. There is, of course challenges to teaching in this digital environment. Youth need to be aware of being ethical in the digital media community. There are many challenges in this community and huge amounts of information. Youth need to be cautioned to be ethical and be aware of the ethical issues involved working in this type of digital environment. The Quest Atlantis Project is a virtual environment which contains academic content in a game. Students are given the opportunity to play the role of a scientist as they create in a game to analyze the different concepts they are learning. Within a game atmosphere, they have the ability to better understand the process of erosion or possibly why fish are dying due to poor water quality. They are able to work within this gaming environment collaborately with other game characters to solve problems within this gaming environment. The students use the game to analyze and study problems. They actually look at and explore the problems more intently. They work collaborately to analyze the problem and become so engaged that the learning community becomes a successful way to work together and learn beyond what anyone ever thought possible.

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